

# OTTER CHATTER NEWSLETTER



## Fall 2016

### Tennessee State Wildlife Laws

Like all states, Tennessee has laws in place to protect and preserve our native wildlife. These laws are enforced by our state wildlife agency, the Tennessee Wildlife Resource Agency (TWRA). Although there are laws that pertain only to Tennessee wildlife, we are not exempt from all federal Wildlife Laws. It is important for all people to be knowledgeable about state and federal wildlife laws because not knowing could cost you! Many of our laws pertain to hunting, fishing, and trapping; however, there are some laws that pertain to all people.

Did you know....

- It is against the law to take any native Tennessee wildlife out of the wild. Yes, that means ANY and ALL native animals, from a tree frog to a robin. This law does allow for the hunting of game animals but only with proper licensure, during the appropriate season, and with the correct hunting equipment.
- The Endangered Species Act prohibits the harassing, harming, pursuing, hunting, shooting, wounding, killing, trapping, capturing and collecting, selling, and/or transporting any endangered species. This is not limited to just the entire animal but to any part of an endangered animal, including a single feather of an endangered bird! Violating this act can result in a \$50,000 fine and/or 1 year in prison.
- It is illegal to own a pet turtle in the state of Tennessee. The main reason this law was implemented is to protect the public from the unknown dangers of owning a turtle. Turtles carry several types of bad bacteria on their skin, including, salmonella.
- Turtles make terrible pets! They are often brought into this state from Florida after being purchased on vacation. The turtles are usually babies and come with a small plastic aquarium with gravel and a plastic palm tree. This is not a suitable habitat! Turtles require a large and expensive aquarium with a basking structure, a special basking light to synthesize vitamins, and a variety of foods. Turtles that are kept as pets often will not survive in the wild. Releasing once captive turtles can spread disease and lead to the spread of invasive species.
- In Tennessee, it is illegal to harm, kill, remove from the wild, or possess native snakes taken from the wild without the proper permits. This includes our native venomous snakes, the copperhead, cottonmouth, and rattlesnake! It is also illegal to release captive bred snakes into the wild. Releasing captive snakes into the wild can spread disease to our native snakes. Also releasing non-native snakes into the wild can lead to them becoming invasive and out competing our native snakes.

### Fall Programs

Please call the Wilderness Station at

(615) 217-3017 or email [outdoormurfreesboro@murfreesborotn.gov](mailto:outdoormurfreesboro@murfreesborotn.gov) to register

**Bird Club:** Sept. 10th -Nickajack Wetlands. Oct. 6th —Wilderness Station. Nov. 26th Gateway Island 9 a.m. Ages 6+. Free

**Turtle Searches:** Tuesdays, Sept. 13th, 20th, & 27th. Oct. 4th. 3:30 p.m. Nickajack Wetlands (call for directions) Ages 8+. Free

**Survival Bracelets-Fall Break Fun:** Thursday, Oct. 6th. 10:30 a.m. Ages 10+ \$3.00/child. **Reservations Required.**

**Nature Journaling:** Tuesdays, Sept. 13th, Oct. 11th, Nov. 8th. 5-7 p.m. Adults. \$15/person. **Reservations Required.**

**Fall Leaf Animal Collage:** Saturday, Nov. 12th. 2:00 p.m. Ages 8+. \$5/child.

**Campfire Circles:** Saturday, Oct. 15th. 6:30 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 12th 5:30 p.m. All Ages. \$3/person.

**Family Campout:** Saturday, Oct. 1st—Sunday, Oct. 2nd. Check-in between 4:30-6. All Ages. \$10/adult, \$5/children 5-12, Ages 4 & under Free. **Reservations Required. Must take a LNT class.**

**Gourmet Campfire Cooking:** Sat. October 15th, 4 p.m. Ages 13+. \$10/person.

**Adult Fall Hikes:** Tuesdays in October & November. 9 a.m. Adults. Free.

**Adult Evening Kayak Float:** Friday, Sept. 16th 4 p.m. Adults. \$15/person. **Reservations Required.**

**Family Kayak Floats:** Friday, Oct. 7th 1 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 5th 11 a.m. Ages 10+. \$15/person. **Reservations Required.**